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## Community-based care for children and young adults with significant special needs

### Family-style accommodation

The age, severity of disability and behavioural tendencies of many young people who have been removed from large, residential institutions prevent them from being cared for in a family context.

They remain in the formal care system and are cared for in small-group homes that are frequently described as *family-type accommodation*.

EQ manages 3 small-group homes for young people with significant special needs.

The Pink House is known by childcare professionals throughout the country having been opened in 2008 and having repeatedly been used as an example of good practice since that date.

We took over management of the homes known as Love and Hope in April, 2015.

EQ's work with those children and young adults in our care is shaped by several core principles –

1. **Community awareness and shared responsibility:** Our work should be transparent and widely understood because service providers act for and on behalf of the community. Those young people in our care are part of that community
2. **Differential care:** Our organizational policy is – as far as possible – to work in the best interests of the young people *as individuals*. They are not a homogenous group.
3. **Positivity:** It is important to distinguish between efficiency (which tends to correlate with administrative convenience) and effectiveness judged in terms of the positive impact of your actions on the young people in your care. As far as possible, resources should be deployed to promote effectiveness. This demands a combination of confidence and vigilance, positive and purposeful action tempered by risk awareness
4. **Opportunity:** We do not focus primarily on integration because we prefer to focus on the provision of opportunity and the two things are not the same. Integration entails trying, as far as possible, to make the young person comply with the average. The benchmark is a notion of social normalcy – a standard - and you work to improve the child's level of compliance. Are you average? Are your children?

